



Contact: Jennifer Lawson (406) 444-5228

Date: March 30, 2010

For Immediate Release

**Great Falls High School Students - First in Montana - to Participate in Teen Emergency Response Training – TOMORROW-**

Wednesday, March 31 at C.M. Russell High School

[ready.mt.gov](http://ready.mt.gov)

Helena – The Governor’s Office of Community Service ([serve.mt.gov](http://serve.mt.gov)) announced today that a group of C.M. Russell High School students in Great Falls are the first in Montana to participate in the Montana Citizen Corps’ Teen CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training. The students will take part in emergency response simulations on Wednesday, March 31 and receive certificates of completion for fulfilling 20 hours of instruction over this 3-day course.

(\*\*\* see Wednesday Training Schedule below\*\*\*)

This is the **first-ever CERT training just for teens** and sponsored by a school.

“The response of the kids has been absolutely positive, they’re really enjoying this training and learning so much,” said Mike Lathrop, Key Club Adviser/Physics Teacher, C.M. Russell High School. “It is a huge thing for kids to understand how to respond and deal with others in a stressful emergency situation.”

The goal of CERT training is for experienced instructors to train members of the community in basic emergency preparedness and response skills so they can better help themselves and others in an emergency.

“High school students are an untapped resource for emergency response preparedness, there are not enough adults to take care of everything in a major emergency,” said John Frederikson, teen CERT trainer and Coordinator, Montana Safe Schools Center at the University of Montana. “CERT training is a terrific way to ensure the effectiveness of our volunteers during an emergency.”

CERT training is a function of Montana Citizen Corps ([ready.mt.gov](http://ready.mt.gov)), an outreach program supported by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency, and administered by the Governor’s Office of Community Service.

“It’s exciting to harness the energy and commitment of these students to help others in their community,” said Jan Lombardi, Director of the Governor’s Office of Community Service. “This is our first Teen CERT and we hope that more teens across Montana will be inspired by their peers in Great Falls. “

Teen CERT training includes: emergency preparedness, basic emergency medical operations, fire safety, weather safety and spotting, disaster psychology, light search and rescue operations, terrorism preparedness and response. Students will practice what they’ve learned through hands-on simulations and drills and receive a certificate of completion.

For more information, visit the website, [ready.mt.gov](http://ready.mt.gov) and click on Montana Citizen Corps.

**WHAT:** Teen CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Training in basic emergency preparedness and response skills.

**WHO:** Great Falls High School Students

**WHERE:** C.M. Russell High School – Rooms 102 and 325

228 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue NW

Great Falls, MT 59404

(406) 268-6100

Teen CERT School Sponsor:

Mike Lathrop, Key Club Adviser/ Physics Teacher

**WHEN: Wednesday, March 31, 2010**

**8am – 10:00am:** Light Search and Rescue (Mike McCloskey–Cascade County Search and Rescue) – Room 102

**10:15am – 12:00 pm:** Terrorism and CERT (Ed Gierke–Disaster and Emergency Services – District 2 Representative) – Room 102

**12:30 pm – 1:00 pm:** Course Review (Lorri Ward Brown – Citizen Corps Training Manager, Governor’s Office of Community Service) - **Room 102**

**1:00 pm – 2:30 pm: Disaster Simulation and Graduation** (Lorri Ward Brown & Jim Adkins, Great Falls CERT Coordinator) - **Room 325**

*\*Students must attend 20-hour course instruction of three sessions over three days to receive a completion certificate. Sessions were offered: March 19, March 26 and March 31.*

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